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CONFIDENTIALCENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
**INFORMATION REPORT**

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COUNTRY Rumania

SUBJECT Ration Cards/Availability of Food, Clothing and Household Commodities in Bucharest Nov-early Dec 53.

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- Ration Cards
1. "The following consumer information dates through early December 53 and pertains to Bucharest.
  2. "Ration cards exist throughout Rumania for the following items:

Bread  
Food Commodities  
Clothing, shoes and shoe repairs  
Firewood and petroleum

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## 3. "The types of ration cards accorded various categories of citizens are:

- Ration Card A      - Miners  
                         B      - Heavy Workers (mainly in heavy metallurgical industries)  
                         B-1    - Heavy Workers (in small plants and factories)  
                         C      - All other categories of employees in the Government's field of labor  
                         D-1    - Pensioners and all family members (wives) or ration card holders in categories A, B, B-1, C and D-1.  
                         D-2    - Children of ration card holders, from birth to the age of 14.

Thus, ration cards are issued to persons within the Government's field of labor and pensioners, and their wives and children.

4. "Persons without the Government's field of labor, with two exceptions, are not entitled to any ration cards. The exceptions are:

- (a) Pregnant women, from the fifth month of pregnancy until delivery. Issued, upon a medical certificate from the Circa Sanitara (Dispensary of a city sub-sector) upon which the woman depends. They are granted ration cards for bread, sugar, and oil of edible sunflower seeds.
- (b) All male and female citizens affected with tuberculosis who also possess a Poverty Certificate -- and thus are indirectly authorized to medical attention at their local Circa Sanitara. They are issued ration cards for bread and firewood, upon a medical certificate from their Circa Sanitara.

The actual issue of the ration cards in both cases is done through the Sfatul Populor (People's Board) of the raion (city sector) in which they live. Each month the cards for bread and food commodities have a different color.

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([redacted] had no ration cards because he was not within the Government's field of labor. [redacted] held the D-1 cards 25X1X granted pensioners and their wives; their children held D-2 cards. Because they found the quantities of food commodities issued on these ration cards insufficient for their daily wants and because certain items missing from State Stores are available in Cooperative Stores, they joined the Gloria Cooperative. They paid an annual membership fee of 100 Lei for the Cooperative Membership Card. As membri Cooperatori they had the right to buy at free prices foods not available in the State Stores.)

## 5. "The following quantities of consumer goods are issued on the D-1 Ration Cards:

- (a) D-1 Cartela de Paine (Bread Ration Card)  
       250 grams of bread per day
- (b) D-1 Alimente (Food Commodities Card) - Issued monthly through the People's Board of the citizen's raion.
- Sugar: 500 gms per person per month  
       Sunflower seed oil: 400 decaliters per person per month  
       Soap: 250 gms per person every three months (including one cake of Cheia toilet soap)  
       Paste fainoase (pasta): 500 gms per person every three months  
       Meat: 150 gms per person per week.

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(c) D-1 Carnet de Rensic (Clothing, Shoes and Shoe Repair Ration Card)

- Issued by the People's Board of the raion, every six months. This particular card is prepared on thick brown cardboard about 12 x 16 cms. It bears the holder's name and surname, precise street address, and city sector. It is stamped with the round stamp of the People's Board of the raion. The middle of the card has the letter 'A' through 'L' inclusive. The left side gives the numbers '1' through '36'. The right upper corner of the card, just over the holder's personal data, has coupons for: shoes, repair of shoes and metraj (white cotton material).

There are 36 points on each ration card (i.e. 72 a year). The card further entitles the holder to:

Three meters of metraj material  
 A pair of shoes - the bon de incaltaminte or shoe coupon  
 Shoe repair - new soles - at a Shoemaker's Cooperative -  
 the bon de reparat incaltaminte (With a coupon in Dec 53  
 a set of new soles and heels cost 1½ Lei)

(Sources A and B were unable to be precise on the number of points needed for various clothing items. Source B remarked vaguely that a prosop (towel) needs six coupons and the letters ABC; a Rumanian basma kerchief needs four coupons and the letter F. They said they had very little money to buy anything.)

(d) D-1 Cartela de Lemne se Petrol (Firewood and Petroleum Ration Card)

- Issued only to the head of a family unit, regardless of the number of dependents. Issued by the People's Board of the raion.

3000 Kilos of firewood per annum  
 Unknown (to sources) quantity of petroleum

The firewood and petroleum are distributed through the State Firewood and POL Supply depots - Combustibil - which exist in every sub-sector of Bucharest. (In Nov 53 Source B renounced 500 kilos of firewood and received in exchange 23 liters of petroleum (gaz). He paid 0.50 bani for the petroleum.)

6. "The following quantities of consumer goods are issued on the D-2 ration cards, for children:

(a) D-2 Cartela de Paine (Bread Ration Card)

300 gms of bread daily

(b) D-2 Cartela de Alimente (Food Commodities Ration Card)

Sugar: 1 kilo per month  
 Edible sunflower seeds and cooking oil: 400 deciliters per month  
 Soap: 250 gms every three months  
 One cake of Cheia toilet soap every three months, in addition -- different from the adult ration  
 Paste Fainoase: 500 gms every three months  
Gris (Semolina): 500 gms per month  
 Meat: 250 gms per week

(c) D-2 Cartela de Imbracaminte (Clothing Ration Card) - Issued every six months, with 41 points per card. The card for children is similar to the adult D-1 except that it is violet in color. The Metraj allowance for children is eight meters per year.

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7. "The following lists of food commodities indicates the prices in lei of these commodities when sold to ration card holders in official outlets (the ration prices) and in Cooperatives or in the State Stores (free prices) in Nov and early Dec 53 in Bucharest. The goods issued through Cooperatives cost the same as goods on the free market; there is more frequent distribution of the goods within the cooperatives.
8. "Bread is on sale in the Centre de paine (Bread Centers). The bread obtainable on ration coupons is also on sale at free prices (naturally higher) in the Centre.

|  | Quantity | Ration Prices-lei | Free Prices-lei |
|--|----------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Black bread (rationed)   | 1 kilo   | 1.40              | 2.80            |
| White bread, long loaves,<br>700 gms each                              | 700 gms  | not available     | 3.80            |
| Semi-white bread, new<br>type on sale early<br>Dec 53 in 700 gm loaves | 700 gms  | not available     | 2.60            |
| <u>chifln</u> (sweet bread)  | one cake | not available     | 0.30            |

9. "There are no ration cards for milk. There are no milk distribution centers for ordinary citizens, not even those within the Government's field of labor. All distribution of milk takes place through the Cooperatives; therefore it is available (in Bucharest at least) only to Cooperative members.

|                                  | Quantity | Ration Prices-lei | Free Prices-lei |
|----------------------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Milk                             | 1 liter  | not on ration     | 1.10            |
| <u>Lapte Batut</u> (acidophilus) | 1 liter  | not on ration     | 1.00            |

10. "There are special centers called Centre Alimentare de Ratiemate to serve holders of the Food Commodity Ration Cards. There is one such center in each city sub-sector of Bucharest, where ration card holders may shop with their coupons. There are also the Comimentare or State Stores for Food Commodities, which sell food commodities to anyone, without coupons. Other food commodities are sold through the Cooperatives to Cooperative members.

|   | Quantity | Ration Prices-lei           | Free Prices-lei |
|---|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Butter  | 1 kilo   | not available               | 25.00           |
| <u>Branza de Vaca</u> (cow-cheese)  |          | not available.....          |                 |
| <u>Branza de Braila</u> (Braila<br>cheese) 1st quality                        | 1 kilo   | not available               | 11.50           |
| 2nd quality   | 1 kilo   | not available               | 9.00            |
| <u>mantina</u> (cream)  |          | not available anywhere..... |                 |
| Rice  | 1 kilo   | not available               | 9.00            |
| Cornflour   | 1 kilo   | not available               | 4.00            |
| <u>Malai</u> (polenta)  | 1 kilo   | not available               | 2.70            |
| Pork fat  | 1 kilo   | not available               | 40.00 - 50.00   |
| <u>Mezuluri</u> (various types<br>salami)                                     | 1 kilo   | not available               | 32.00 - 38.00   |
| <u>Halva</u> (Turkish candy), only<br>100 gms sold to a customer<br>at a time | 1 kilo   | not available               | 21.00           |
| <u>Bombon</u> (candy)   | 1 kilo   | not available               | 12.00 - 20.00   |

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|                                   | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Ration Prices-lei</u>             | <u>Free Prices-lei</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Chocolate                         |                 | Available at free prices; not known. |                        |
| Cocoa                             | 1 kilo          | not available                        | 140.00                 |
| Olives                            | 1 kilo          | not available                        | 25.00                  |
| Eggs, through the Cooperatives    | each            | 0.65                                 | ---                    |
| Eggs, in State Stores and markets | each            | ---                                  | 1.80 - 3.00            |

11. "Meat is sold in State Butcher Stores called Comcar. Types of meat, available only to ration card holders, are as follows:

|                                | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Ration Prices-lei</u> | <u>Free Prices-lei</u> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Beef                           |                 |                          |                        |
| 1st quality                    | 1 kilo          | 7.00                     | 10.00                  |
| 2nd quality                    | 1 kilo          | 5.00                     | 10.00                  |
| 3rd quality                    | 1 kilo          | 3.00                     | 10.00                  |
| Pork                           |                 |                          |                        |
| 1st quality ( <u>cotlete</u> ) | 1 kilo          | 9.00                     | 14.00 - 15.00          |
| 2nd quality                    | 1 kilo          | 7.00                     | 14.00 - 15.00          |
| 3rd quality                    | 1 kilo          | 5.00                     | 14.00 - 15.00          |
| Lamb                           | 1 kilo          | 7.00                     | 10.00                  |

The quality of meat is determined by the Comcar clerk (Vanzator-Macelar). The consumer can't protest too many bones, etc. There is a certain degree of selection for ration-card holders, none for buyers at the free prices. Meat sold for free prices is lumped into one quality and sold as beef or lamb at the fixed price of 10 lei per kilo. The free prices for pork are higher. There are two queues in front of any Comcar store. In the first queue customers are waiting to have ration coupons detached at the cashier's booth. The customer hands over the ration card. The cashier detaches the coupons. The customer indicates the quality of meat desired and pays the cashier the necessary money -- a housewife will be carrying the ration cards of her family. Then the customer is given a small piece of paper bearing the stamp of the Comcar on which the cashier has written the quantity and quality of meat purchased. The customer lines up in the other queue to collect the meat, hands over the slip of paper, watches the meat weighed and is handed a piece of paper -- generally old newspaper -- in which to wrap it. The customer does the wrapping. Wrapping paper is seldom available in the meat and food commodity stores. There was a shortage of meat in Bucharest in Dec 53. Ration card holders are not forced to do their shopping in one specific State Store; this has been true since spring 1953. But consumers do stick to one store so that they will be known and perhaps better served. The clerk in a State Store may ask a ration card holder to identify himself, prior to issue of rations.

12. "Fish is sold in the Compescarie (Fish Centers). There is little variety, and the centers are poorly supplied. It is very difficult to obtain cren or stioca. Not available at ration prices. One kilo cost 6.30 lei (free price) Dec 53.
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13. "Fruits and vegetables are sold in the Aprozar centers in markets such as the Ober market.

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|                                 | <u>Quantity</u> | <u>Ration Prices</u>          | <u>Free Prices-lei</u> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <u>Ardei (peppers)</u>          | 1 kilo          | not available on ration cards | 0.45                   |
| <u>Varza (cabbage), scarce</u>  | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.20                   |
| <u>Frax (leek)</u>              | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.65                   |
| <u>Cenopida (cauliflower)</u>   | 1 kilo          | "                             | (forgotten price)      |
| <u>Marcov (carrots)</u>         | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.45                   |
| <u>Patranciul (parsley)</u>     | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.65                   |
| <u>Ridichi de lana (radish)</u> | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.40                   |
| <u>Rosii Verzi de Muraturi</u>  | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.25                   |
| (green tomatoes, for pickles)   |                 |                               |                        |
| <u>Bfieala (beetroot)</u>       | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.65                   |
| <u>Capse (onions), scarce</u>   | 1 kilo          | "                             | 1.20                   |
| <u>Usturoi (garlic), scarce</u> | 1 kilo          | "                             | 1.20                   |
| <u>Mere (apples)</u>            | 1 kilo          | "                             | 0.65 - 1.20            |
| <u>Pere (pears)</u>             | 1 kilo          | "                             | 2.00                   |
| <u>Prune (prunes)</u>           | 1 kilo          | "                             | 1.00 - 1.20            |
| <u>Struguri</u>                 | 1 kilo          | "                             | 2.50 - 3.00            |

14. "The following foods were very scarce autumn 1953 in the State Stores (for free sales to citizens without the Government's field of labor and at ration prices to holders of ration cards): Mezeluri (salami), cheese, butter, rice and sugar. These foods were more easily available in Cooperatives to Cooperative members."
15. "Farmers in the villages around Bucharest bring in products to all the markets and sell them directly to customers, sometimes at lower prices. Farmers also sometimes deliver products directly to a customer's home address. But membership in a Cooperative is the only way to gain access to scarce goods that are rarely, if at all, distributed to the ordinary citizen."
16. "One liter of wine cost 4.50 - 25.00 lei (only at free prices) in late 1953.
- Hairdressing
17. "In late 1953 a man's haircut in a Barber's Cooperative cost 2.00 Lei. A woman's electric permanent wave cost 30 lei."

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## CODES OF AREA CODES

|        |     |
|--------|-----|
| 107.79 | 60M |
| 784.3  | 60M |
| 781.11 | 60M |
| 852.1  | 60M |

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